



Excellence Exchange Corner

Q: We have had unit-based councils in our organization for a few years. In some councils the managers come to the meetings, in others they do not attend the meetings. What is considered the best practice for managers attending unit council meetings?

A: To attend or not attend council meetings is a common question, and it really depends on the manager. In some instances, the formal unit leader can attend the meeting and allow the staff chair to lead the meeting, in other instances it is difficult for the manager to attend and not lead the meeting. In the latter case it may be more beneficial for the leader to attend only the last few minutes as a check in to see if they are needed as a resource, or if resources are needed for a project or initiative. This leader may choose to not attend the meetings at all.

The key to leadership presence at council meetings is this: they need to know what is happening at the meeting, be available as a resource, coach, or mentor, and they need to provide information as needed. This information may be quality data, strategic priorities, and/or unit goals. All this can be accomplished in a few different ways:

- Meeting before and/or after the council meetings with chair/co-chair
- Agenda planning collaboratively with the chair/co-chair
- Follow up after the meeting
- Sharing of quality data to drive the work of the council
- Attending the meeting and sitting outside the circle (in the background)
- Formal leader's clear articulation of expectations and council members' clear understanding of Responsibility/Authority/Accountability (RAA)

These are a few ways the unit leader can be actively involved in the unit council with or without being physically present. For more information on Shared Governance and specifically the leader's role in shared governance please contact Marky Medeiros mmedeiros@chcm.com or Gen Guanci gguanci@chcm.com.



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